

REMARKS

There remains pending in this application claims 1-11, of which claims 1 and 11 are independent. No claims have been added or cancelled.

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the above application is respectfully sought.

Applicants wish to express their appreciation for the courtesies extended to Applicants' undersigned representative during the personal interview held with the Examiner and his supervisor on February 16, 2011. At that interview, Applicants' undersigned representative reviewed the claimed invention in light of the embodiment depicted in Figure 1 and explained how the claims as amended read on the independent claims. At the interview, Applicants' representative explained that in accordance with the invention a predetermined region of the sheet material had its moisture content adjusted to within a predetermined range and that the external force applying unit applied its external force to that predetermined region after having its moisture content adjusted. Applicants sought in the claim amendments to more clearly define the features of the invention by providing that the external force applying unit is provided at a position where the sheet material for which the moisture content has previously been adjusted is fed and that it applies the external force to the predetermined region of the sheet material for which the moisture content has been adjusted.

At the interview it was agreed that the claims as now presented were distinguishable from the applied reference, namely Nojiri et al. (EP 1286156), since, inter alia, Nojiri et al. does not disclose the moisture adjusting apparatus which adjusts the moisture content of the sheet to

within predetermined range or the application of the external impact to a region of the sheet whose moisture content had been adjusted.

The Examiner indicated that he wished to review the art again to be certain that no additional relevant art was available.

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the above application is respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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